

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A networked computer telephony system, comprising:
  - 5 a plurality of Extensible Markup Language (XML) documents being hosted by web servers on the Internet, each of said XML documents constituting a telephony application associated with a specified call number and including telephony-specific XML tags instructing how a telephone call to the specified call number is to be processed;
  - 10 one or more application gateway center accessible via the Internet for receiving and processing said telephone call, said one or more application gateway center individually further comprising:
    - means for retrieving the XML document associated with the specified call number;
    - and
    - 15 means for executing the associated XML document including telephony-specific XML tags to process said telephone call.
2. The networked computer telephony system as in 1, wherein said system includes the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) and the Internet.
- 20 3. The networked computer telephony system as in 2, wherein said telephone call originated from the PSTN and is routed to the internet via an internet access server.

4. The networked computer telephony system as in 2, wherein said telephone call originated from a Voice-over-IP phone connected to the Internet.

5 5. The networked computer telephony system as in 2, wherein said telephone call originated from a telephone attached to a computer connected to the Internet.

6. The networked computer telephony system as in 1, where said one or more application centers individually further comprises:

10 a caching server for caching data exchanged between the application center and the Internet.

7. The networked computer telephony system as in 1, wherein:

said one or more application centers individually manipulates media in a predefined format native to the application center; and

15 said one or more application centers individually further comprises:

a media conversion proxy server for converting between said predefined format native to the application gateway center and other media formats outside of the application gateway center.

20 8. The networked computer telephony system as in 1, further comprising:

a plurality of network traffic monitors, each associated with an individual application gateway center for periodically monitoring network traffic statistics regarding a response time of a specific XML document being requested by a specific application gateway center;

5        a network monitoring server for dynamically analyzing said network statistics collected from said plurality of network traffic monitors into a prioritized list of XML documents relative to application gateway centers having the fastest access thereto; and

means responsive to said prioritized list for directing said telephone call to a specific call number to the application gateway with the fastest access to said associated XML document.

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9. A method of processing a telephone call to a specified call number, comprising:

providing an Extensible Markup Language (XML) document associated with the specified call number, said XML document constituting a telephony application and including telephony-specific XML tags instructing how a telephone call to the specified call 15 number is to be processed;

posting said XML document to a specified location on the Internet;

providing a directory for locating said XML document by the specified call number;

receiving said telephone call on the Internet;

retrieving said XML document at the specified location looked up from said directory 20 with the specified call number; and

processing said telephone call according to said XML document.

10. A method of processing a telephone call to a specified call number as in 9, further comprising:

providing an application gateway center on the Internet for performing said step of  
5 receiving said telephone call, retrieving said XML document and processing said telephone call according to said XML document are performed by said application gateway center.

11. A method of processing a telephone call to a specified call number as in 10,

wherein:

10 said XML document posted to a specified location is one of a plurality of XML documents at different locations on the Internet; and

said application gateway center is one of a plurality of application gateway centers provided on the Internet.

15 12. A method of processing a telephone call to a specified call number as in 11, further comprising:

monitoring the accessibility of each XML documents relative to said plurality of application gateway centers on the Internet; and

20 responsive to said monitoring, receiving said telephone call at one of said plurality of application gateway centers that is most accessible to said XML document.

13. A method of processing a telephone call to a specified call number, as in anyone of 9-12, wherein said telephone call originated from the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN.)

5        14. A method of processing a telephone call to a specified call number, as in anyone of 9-12, wherein said telephone call originated from the Internet.

15. A method of processing a telephone call to a specified call number, as in anyone of 9-12, wherein said telephone call originated from a wireless network.